

PERUSAL SCRIPT

SUPERPOWERS

by J. D. Newman



Newport, Maine

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SUPERPOWERS

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Order # 3235

ORIGINAL CAST

KYE.....	Cecilia Saenz
AMANDA.....	Taylor Bobo
BRI-HAN.....	David J. Curtis
AVA.....	Leata Bobo
STARLET.....	Rachel Peterson
AINIA.....	Clara Falconer
VANE.....	Jonathan Curtis
NICOLE.....	Cairo Evans
ALaura.....	Janina Curtis
TIFFANY.....	Darcy Finch
ANGLEICA.....	Anisa Alnasser
HEAVY METAL.....	Thomas Hatch
KASSIMOMBI.....	Macie Sanders
ZANE.....	Michael Curtis
ZERO.....	Allison Losee

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION TEAM

Directors.....	Zahra Alnasser, Tyler Botill, Rhani Alam
Production Stage Manager.....	Marta Myers
Soundboard Operator.....	Hayley Christensen
Lightboard Operator.....	Aaron Ashton
Program Manager.....	Kynsie Kiggins
Noorda Camp Intern.....	David Chamberlain
Production Manager.....	Aja Vogelmann

SUPERPOWERS by J.D. Newman. About 60 minutes. 15 Characters: 5m, 9f, 1eith. Settings can be detailed, suggested, or projected: A passenger car on a Narrow-Gauge Railroad, and along the tracks; a dorm unit, a main gate, a common room, at the 'facility'; an abandoned silver mine, somewhere between the 'Facility" and a sawmill, the sawmill. Costumes are contemporary clothing, with hints of superpowers. Three groups meet for the first time: The Newcomers, The Remainers, The Leavers. All with superpowers, and the chains that go with them. A group of young people, traveling by train to a secret government facility in the Rockies, discover that the only thing that they have in common is that they each have uncommon abilities. As they arrive at The Facility, they discover other young people who have been secluded there until their "superpowers" can be controlled or neutralized. The youth combine forces to escape and make their way to a safe haven where they will be able to choose their own destinies. Will they give up their powers, use their powers to help the group live independently, or learn to restrict their powers so they can return to their families? Interesting note in the creation of this play. The characteristics of the 14 youth characters were established by young people in the Noorda Theatre Summer Camp's youth play program. The young actors shaped the characters they portrayed and determined their characters' final choices. The playwright then put it all together in its final form. **Order #3235.**

CAST OF CHARACTERS 5m, 9f, 1either

THE NEWCOMERS (directed by Zahra Alnasser)

- KYE (18) A young man who struggles to control the fire within; loyal & protective to others
- AMANDA (12): Reaches out as far as she can, physically and socially
- BRI-HAN (14): Possesses super strength; reads fantasy and sci-fi
- AVA: (14) Uses a ukulele to focus ability to plant thoughts in others
- STARLET (12): A girl who was homeless; can materialize things; can't make them disappear

THE REMAINERS (directed by Tyler Botill)

- AINIA (5, seems 13): A precocious biologist; was enlarged and so is vulnerable to viruses
- VANE (18): Technopath, started as a hacker but realized he could hack with his thoughts
- NICOLE (13): A girl with superspeed ability who tries to stay ahead of those around her
- ALAURA (16): Girl who induces sleep and can read and shape dreams and nightmares
- TIFFANY (30, seems 13): An adult shapeshifter who has taken the shape of her 13-year-old self

THE LEAVERS (directed by Rhani Alam)

- ANGELICA (16): A mind-reader who is learning to plant thoughts as well as to read them
- HEAVY METAL (15): A young man composed of metal with holographic skin
- KASSIMOMBI (13): A telepath who has grown up at The Facility
- ZANE (16): A young man with magnetism & metal controlling abilities; VANE's brother
- ZERO (14): A young woman who controls electricity; sparky, funny, scatterbrained

J.D. Newman — Dr. Newman is a professor of theatre at Utah Valley University and the Director of the Theatre for Youth and Education (TYE) Center, and currently serves as Chair of the Theatre Department. He lives with his family in Sandy City, Utah. Dr. Newman became the first recipient of the Reba R. Robertson Award from the Children's Theatre Foundation of America. At UVU, Dr. Newman has directed such plays as *The Secret Garden*, *Princess Academy*, and *Androcles and the Lion* in the Bastian Theatre. He has also served as the director of the Noorda Theatre Summer Camp and has produced or co-produced touring productions including *A Village Fable*, *The Princess and the Goblin*, *Honk!*, and *Pedro's Magic Shoes*. As a playwright, he has adapted scripts for Newbery medalists including Avi, Paul Fleischman, and Richard Peck. Newman taught and directed at Highland High School for eighteen years, from 1991 to 2010 with a sabbatical to Texas in 1998-99. He served as Artistic Director of the Salt Lake School for the Performing Arts during the 2009-2010 school year. Newman earned his B.F.A. and M.Ed. from the University of Utah, his M.A. from the University of Texas, and his Ph.D. from New York University. With Judy Matetzschk-Campbell, he co-authored *Tell Your Story: The Plays and Playwriting of Sandra Fenichel Asher*, and his book *Playwriting in Schools: Dramatic Navigation* received the 2020 Distinguished Book Award from the American AATE. Dr. Newman chairs the Playwrights In Our Schools Project and served three years on the board of the American Alliance for Theatre and Education. *Sandy and the Weird Sisters*, his first novel, has been followed by 2 sequels, *Sandy and the Dance of Faith* and *Clara and the Mermaids*. His stand alone young reader's story, *Make-Believe Friends* is also published by Leicester Bay Books.

SUPERPOWERS

based on characters created by the student cast of the
2019 Youth Play Production of the Noorda Theatre Summer Camp

Scene One:

**Old-fashioned passenger car on a narrow-gage railroad,
Newcomers Group**

AT RISE—Lights up on a space suggesting an old-fashioned railroad coach, occupied by five present-day young people, all strangers to each other. There are four heavy suitcases in the car and the setting is suggested by a projected image behind them. On one bench, AVA strums on her ukulele. At the front or back of the car, KYE stays close to the wood stove. On another bench, STARLET sits nervously and holds a knapsack on her lap and on another BRI-HAN reads his book. AMANDA focuses on her smart phone.

AMANDA: Just lost my signal. We're officially in the wilderness.

(No response from others. Puts phone away.)

(to Ava) Hi. I'm Amanda.

AVA: "Leave me alone, oh leave me alone, oh leave me alone..."

AMANDA: Okay!

(approaching KYE at the stove.)

Are you cold?

KYE: I... like to stay close to the stove.

AMANDA: A wood-burning stove in a wooden train car... seems a little dangerous.

KYE: *Very* dangerous!

(AMANDA takes KYE's hand. It's hot.)

AMANDA: Your hand is warm. I thought you said you were cold.

KYE: I was... touching the stove.

(AMANDA notices a spark on her clothing. KYE notices it too and is terrified.)

AMANDA: Spark... fire... sleeve... help!

(As she thrashes, her phone flies out window.)

KYE: *(handing her water or dumping it on her)* Here! Put it out! Quick!

AMANDA: Was that spark from the stove?

(touches stove)

It's hardly burning.

KYE: Maybe a spark from the steam engine went flying through the window.

AMANDA: Where's my phone.

AVA: Went flying through the window.

AMANDA: No!

(She reaches out the window, arm unseen.)

AVA: It's gone.

AMANDA: *(retrieving phone)* Got it.

AVA: How did you do that?

AMANDA: It... stuck to the side of the train.

KYE: I'm Kye. Sorry about your phone.

AMANDA: It was an accident. Are you okay?

KYE: The stove is out of wood.

AMANDA: Want my scarf?

STARLET: *(producing a log from her knapsack)* Want a log?

KYE: Yes! Thank you!

(He takes log, stuffs it into the stove.)

AMANDA: You brought a log in your knapsack?

STARLET: I try to be prepared. I'm Starlet. Are you hungry?

AMANDA: Yeah, it's been a long ride.

STARLET: Here. Have a peanut butter sandwich.

(STARLET produces a sandwich and tosses it to AMANDA, who avoids it. It lands on BRI-HAN.)

AMANDA: Thanks, but I can't touch it. Peanut allergy. I swell up like a balloon.

BRI-HAN: Dibs! Thanks.

AMANDA: I only eat cheese and ketchup sandwiches. No one else likes them, but they're basically pizza.

STARLET: You're in luck! I just happen to have...

(She hands AMANDA a second sandwich.)

AMANDA: A cheese and ketchup sandwich? That's great, and a little spooky.

AVA: *(singing)* "Two all-beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions, on a sesame seed bun"

STARLET: *(pulling out a hamburger container)* Want a Big Mac?

AVA: Wow! It's even hot! Call me Ava.

(AMANDA and KYE stare at AVA and STARLET.)

AVA: What? You haven't heard that McDonald's jingle? It's a classic.

KYE: Can I ask how you're doing that?

STARLET: Would you like...

KYE: Nothing else, thanks. The log was all I needed.

AMANDA: *(to KYE)* What are you? A beaver?

(to STARLET)

Aren't you going to...

STARLET: I don't eat much.

AMANDA: But you feed everyone else.

(to BRI-HAN)

Did you see what she just did?

BRI-HAN: Don't look a gift horse in the mouth.

(AMANDA almost introduces herself but he cuts her off.)

BRI-HAN: I'm reading.

AMANDA: What are you reading?

BRI-HAN: *(after a sigh)* Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone.

AMANDA: Did J.K. Rowling write a new book?

(She tries to pull the book to her; it doesn't budge.)

BRI-HAN: Her first one with the British title. Welcome to the Hogwarts Express.

AMANDA: Looks more like the Polar Express. I'm Amanda.

BRI-HAN: So I heard. I'm Bri-Han. Short for Brian Hansen.

AMANDA: Nice to meet you, Bri-Han.

(AMANDA takes BRI-HAN's hand; it crushes hers.)

BRI-HAN: Don't...

AMANDA: Ow! You don't have to grip so hard!

BRI-HAN: That's as soft as I get.

(Awkward silence.)

AMANDA: Does anyone know about this "facility" that we're going to? Or even where it is?

AVA: *(singing to ukulele)* "Rocky Mountain High, Colorado."

AMANDA: I know. I've read the brochure. It's high in the Rockies, and it's only accessible by train.

KYE: "By vintage narrow gage train." I have a photographic memory.

AMANDA: That Gilmore lady told my parents about The Facility but she didn't talk to me.

AVA: That was the same with me.

BRI-HAN: Me too!

AVA: What kind of school is The Facility? It doesn't even have a website.

KYE: "Facility" comes from the French word "facile" meaning "easy." Whatever it is, the Facility should make our lives easier.

(The train car lurches to a stop and then starts to move again.)

BRI-HAN: What just happened?

STARLET: Our car got uncoupled.

BRI-HAN: How would you know that?

STARLET: I've ridden a lot of trains... freight trains... box cars...

BRI-HAN: Should we be worried?

AVA: “Don’t Worry... Be Happy.” Do-do-do, do-do-do-do, do-do do

(They relax. As AVA sings, AMANDA sticks her arm out the window with her phone.)

AMANDA: Starlet is right! We’ve been disconnected from the main train.

BRI-HAN: Are you sure?

AMANDA: See! I reached out the window and took this picture!

BRI-HAN: It looks like you reached a long way out...

STARLET: We’re still moving.

BRI-HAN: Are we rolling backwards?

AMANDA: We’re rolling forward, and we’re going uphill! The car is moving on its own!

KYE: Don’t panic, but I think we’re being kidnapped.

STARLET: What would anyone want with us?

KYE: Think about it. What do we have in common?

BRI-HAN: The fact that none of us is common.

AMANDA: What do you mean?

BRI-HAN: We can do things that someone could exploit.

KYE: That’s right. We’ve been trying to hide our abilities, but we each have them, don’t we?

(Pause. No one wants to admit it.)

KYE: I’m pyrokinetic. I have to burn things when I’m nervous. Without that wood in the stove, this train car would be toast. I could be dangerous, and so could each of you.

AMANDA: I’m not dangerous; I’m a contortionist. I can stretch my arms and body, but that doesn’t endanger anyone.

KYE: If you were captured, could someone force you to break into a building? And what about you?

AVA: Well, when I sing with my ukulele, I plant thoughts in people’s brains. It’s like advertising on steroids. It’s not dangerous.

KYE: Could you make a bank teller open the vault and give you all the money?

AMANDA: *(to Bri-Han)* You almost broke my fingers with your handshake.

BRI-HAN: I know. I could hurt someone with my super-strength I could even break down a building.

KYE: Someone could exploit us, especially Starlet. You materialize things, don’t you?

STARLET: Yeah, like 3-D printing without a 3-D printer.

AVA: Can you only do that in your magic knapsack.

STARLET: The knapsack just hides it. If I made a burger appear in mid-air, you’d freak.

KYE: A terrorist could make you materialize a gun on an airplane.

AMANDA: So does The Facility want to exploit our powers? Get rid of our powers? Get rid of us?

KYE: I’d say we don’t find out. We need to get off of this train car!

STARLET: It’s not slowing down.

KYE: So we jump from the train!

BRI-HAN: I don't know if I'd dare....

AVA: "So say Geronimo! Say Geronimo! Say Geronimo! Say Geronimo! Bombs away!

BRI-HAN: (*picks up four suitcases*) I've got the luggage! Geronimo!

(*They daringly prepare to leap but the train car lurches to a stop.*)

VOICE: Welcome to The Facility.

AVA: (*playing Twilight theme song*) "Do-do-do-do! Do-do-do-do!"

(*Blackout. End of scene.*)

Scene Two:

A dormitory unit at The Facility, Remainers Group

AT RISE—Three young people are seen in a dormitory unit at The Facility. AINIA, who appears to be a thirteen-year-old girl, takes care of her imaginary reptiles in imaginary cages downstage. VANE is working with a laptop or pad, not touching the screen or keyboard but manipulating what he sees with his outstretched fingers. ALAURA, a dream-reader and dream-maker, sleeps on a bench. NICOLE, a young woman with superspeed, rushes in and tries to get VANE's attention.

NICOLE: The newcomers have arrived!

VANE: Don't break my concentration, Nicole. I've almost connected us with the internet. Thanks for swiping this laptop from the classroom.

NICOLE: Took me less than a minute! Alaura! Wake up! There are newcomers are inside the gate!

ALAURA: Let me sleep, Nicole. You know I can't sleep when the rest of you do!

NICOLE: You need to learn to screen out our dreams.

ALAURA: I *can't* screen them out! It's like watching three screens at once with Dolby sound! What are the newcomers like?

NICOLE: I've only seen them through the train car windows. They've locked themselves inside.

ALAURA: They can't stay in there forever.

NICOLE: Maybe you could convince them to come out.

ALAURA: Only if they fall asleep. Keep an eye on them, but don't let the guards see you.

NICOLE: (*speeding away*) They never do.

ALAURA: What are you up to, Vane?

VANE: Get some sleep, Alaura. The newcomers will be here soon.

ALAURA: I'm awake now. Have you made a connection?

VANE: Getting into the system is easy. Covering my tracks is hard.

ALaura: Did you access our Facebook accounts?

VANE: Some of them. We've been telling our friends and families how great The Facility is.

ALaura: They're posting on our Facebook accounts?!

VANE: They don't want our parents to worry and they worry we'll say something negative.

ALaura: We don't have much to complain about. The Facility is everything Miss Gilmore told our parents it would be.

VANE: The photos in the brochure are genuine; they just don't show the fences.

ALaura: Good food, good lodging, good teachers, good computer labs... just no internet access. It's a teenage paradise; we're just not allowed to leave.

VANE: Oh, we can leave, all right, as soon as they can neutralize our powers.

ALaura: Did you disconnect those new security cameras?

VANE: I re-routed them. I've been looping old surveillance footage. They can't see what we're doing, but they think they can.

ALaura: You rock at hacking, Vane. You could have a career in cyber security.

VANE: Or they could send me to jail.

ALaura: How much hacking did you do before you came here? I see your dreams and nightmares but I can't tell which ones are real. Did you really knock out your city's power-grid?

VANE: That one was an accident.

ALaura: Did you really post Ozzie Osbourne lyrics on the boards of the stock exchange?

VANE: That one was a harmless prank.

ALaura: That made national headlines. Did you really launch a nuclear missile?

VANE: No! Not yet. That one is my nightmare.

ALaura: I can't imagine you ever doing that.

VANE: What if a terrorist kidnapped me and tortured me?

ALaura: Terrorists have their own hackers for cracking passcodes.

VANE: But I can control cyberspace with my mind. "Where I'm hacking, I don't need... codes."

(VANE and/or ALaura hum "Back to the Future" theme. They both laugh.)

ALaura: *(to AINIA)* Hey, Ainia, how are your invisible reptiles doing?

AINIA: They're not invisible. They're imaginary.

ALaura: They seem fun. I had an imaginary unicorn when I was a child.

AINIA: I was never a normal child! I was a prodigy! I kept poisonous reptiles before they brought me here.

ALaura: Weren't they dangerous?

AINIA: I know how to handle them. I used their venom to cure diseases.

ALaura: So you're imagining your reptiles...

AINIA: In perfect detail, and I'm recording real data. It's a thought experiment.

ALaura: Your dreams are kind of frightening, Ainia. It's like watching the Monster Channel.

AINIA: Don't try to plant happy dreams in my head.

ALAURA: I only tried that once!

AINIA: It was like sugar-coated *Bambi*.

ALAURA: Until you changed the cute little animals into zombies.

AINIA: If I want to have nightmares, that's my own business. I'm punishing myself.

ALAURA: Why?!

AINIA: I cause diseases.

ALAURA: You *cure* diseases! Real ones! You're a gifted biologist.

AINIA: I'm a bridge between viruses and humans, even though I don't get sick.

ALAURA: That's not your fault!

AINIA: Actually, it sort of is. In The Facility, they can control the viruses. That's why I can't ever leave.

VANE: I'm cutting my connection. I'm getting a migraine.

(NICOLE returns.)

NICOLE: They got the newcomers out.

VANE: Did the newcomers put up a fight?

NICOLE: One boy has super-strength and the other shoots fire. They tried to protect the three girls.

ALAURA: What kind of powers do the girls have?

NICOLE: Flexibility, materialization, and something with a ukulele.

VANE: Weird!

ALAURA: No weirder than us.

NICOLE: They're examining the newcomers. I'm going to hide and listen.

VANE: Don't bother. I've reversed the video monitors. You can watch the examination on my screen.

NICOLE: Great! You've made my job easier.

(Enter TIFFANY, who seems to be 13. NICOLE shuts off the laptop or pad.)

TIFFANY: Hello. I'm going to be living with you.

ALAURA: *(nodding)* Are you a new arrival?

TIFFANY: I've been living elsewhere in The Facility.

ALAURA: Welcome. Don't be nervous. I'm Alaura. I see and re-shape dreams.

NICOLE: I'm Nicole, but my hometown called me "Speeder."

VANE: I'm Vane... that's my name, not my attitude. Okay, *sometimes* it's my attitude.

TIFFANY: I'm Tiffany.

ALAURA: What's your superpower, Tiffany? Apparently not hairdressing. That style makes you look my aunt.

TIFFANY: It does?

ALAURA: I can fix it. Let me lift you up here...

(ALAURA tries to lift TIFFANY to stand her on a box, but TIFFANY is twice as heavy as ALAURA expects.)

No offense, Tiffany, but you're heavier than you look.

TIFFANY: Super-density.

NICOLE: Is that your super-power?

TIFFANY: It's a side effect.

ALAURA: Why don't you have a seat?

(TIFFANY does so. ALAURA re-does her hair.)

NICOLE: I like your outfit.

TIFFANY: Thank you. It was the most popular girl's outfit on Amazon.

NICOLE: You're supposed to untuck your shirt-tails.

TIFFANY: I prefer them tucked in. I guess I'm old fashioned.

NICOLE: *Very* old fashioned, but we're cool with that.

TIFFANY: *(to AINIA)* Hello, Ainia.

AINIA: I didn't tell you my name, and I've never known anyone else called Ainia.

TIFFANY: It's unique. What are you doing?

AINIA: Helping my gila monster shed her skin, and she doesn't like other people watching.

VANE: So what brings you to The Facility?

(pause)

You can tell us. I've blocked the monitor cameras.

TIFFANY: You have?!

VANE: I assume you'll keep our secrets.

TIFFANY: If you let me keep mine.

VANE: Fair enough.

NICOLE: You seem familiar.

TIFFANY: That's because I look so ordinary.

ALAURA: Even when I touch your head, I can't read your thoughts.

TIFFANY: *(standing up, alarmed)* Were you trying to do so?

ALAURA: It's... how I get to know people. You're good at shielding your thoughts. That takes practice.

TIFFANY: Young lady, I didn't come here to be interrogated!

NICOLE: *Young* lady?! I think older than you!

TIFFANY: Sorry. I usually live with adults who use phrases like that. It will be strange to live with young people... *other* young people.

ALAURA: Did they send you here as a spy?

AINIA: Maybe she came as a messenger.

NICOLE: So what's your message?

TIFFANY: Do you really want to be normal? Do you want to lose your special abilities?

ALAURA: Of course not! They've become part of who we are.

NICOLE: But what other choice do we have?

VANE: I don't like being locked up, but The Facility keeps me safe from being captured.

AINIA: We're already captured! They're keeping us inside this people-zoo.

TIFFANY: What if there were a place where you could keep and use your powers?

VANE: Would we be safe?

ALAURA: Would we have food and shelter and heat?

TIFFANY: The newcomers could help you with that.

NICOLE: Who would take care of us?

TIFFANY: You would need to take care of each other.

VANE: Could you lead us to such a place?

ALAURA: Could we trust you?

TIFFANY: I hope to earn your trust.

AINIA: I trust her.

(others stare)

I have my reasons. You should go with her; I have to stay here.

TIFFANY: What if I could cure you, Ainia, so you won't make other people sick?

AINIA: You can't cure me. You don't have a densifier.

TIFFANY: I managed to get one from NASA. Would you want to use it?

AINIA: *(building to a tantrum)* No! I couldn't go back to how I was! No one understood me! No one listened to me! No one took me seriously! It's not fair! It's not fair! I won't! I won't! I won't!

ALAURA: Calm down, Ainia. Act your age!

AINIA: I *am* acting my age!

(pause)

I'm five!

NICOLE: You're five years old?! You look as old as me and Tiffany.

AINIA: I'm so far ahead of other five-year-olds that I begged my parents to...

VANE: To age you?

AINIA: To enlarge me. Try lifting me.

ALAURA: You've never let anyone touch you.

(AINIA stares at her.)

All right.

(She lifts AINIA)

You're so light!

AINIA: My atoms are spread apart. That's why viruses can get in!

(indicating TIFFANY)

And her atoms are closer together.

VANE: *(to TIFFANY)* Who are you really?

TIFFANY: Agree to follow me and I'll tell you everything.

VANE: Tell us everything and we'll agree to follow you.

TIFFANY: Then we are at an impasse. What about your room-mates? Would they come with us?

NICOLE: They're getting out of here on their own, or they're trying to.

ALaura: They'll be back.

(Blackout. End of scene.)

Scene Three:

Near the Main Gate of "The Facility,"

Leavers Group

AT RISE—As the lights come up, we see five young people standing in a line, facing the (unseen) tall metal fence of The Facility downstage. KASSIMOMBI is an expert at planting suggestions in people's minds. ANGELICA is skilled in reading minds and is learning from KASSIMOMBI how to plant suggestions. ZERO controls electricity and paces around nervously, trying to contain her energy. ZANE can draw and bend metal and considers how to bend the gate. HEAVY METAL (H.M.) who is literally made of metal, considers how he can burst the gate.

ZANE: The Magnificent Five strike again!

ZERO: And again, and again, and again...

ZANE: We're bound and determined!

ZERO: We're stubborn and stupid! Three strikes and we're still not out.

KASSIMOMBI: Quiet, Zero!

ZERO: Zane started it.

KASSIMOMBI: You're breaking my concentration! I don't want to fail. I'm trying to distract the guards!

ZERO: I could distract them with an electric shock!

(ZERO zaps KASSIMOMBI.)

KASSIMOMBI: Not funny, Zero. The guards are going to spot us!

ANGELICA: I can read their thoughts,

KASSIMOMBI: They haven't detected us... yet.

HEAVY METAL: I could ram through that gate!

ZERO: Don't try, metal-head! Last time, you gave yourself a three-day headache.

HEAVY METAL: I'll get a running start this time...

ZERO: And Charlie Brown will kick that football to the moon!

KASSIMOMBI: I'm distracting the guards from hearing you, but you're hard to ignore.

ANGELICA: Everyone focus! If we're going to get out of here, we need to use our heads.

ZERO: And not as battering rams.

ZANE: All right! Here's the plan. I'll bend the metal fence just before Heavy Metal hits it.

HEAVY METAL: That will knock me out of the way. You keep forgetting; I'm made of metal!

With great power comes great vulnerability.

ZERO: As a power, it's not all that great. Your brother controls cyberspace.

ZANE: Well, I control metal!

(He accidentally zaps HEAVY METAL, who is pushed back and lands on the ground - with a safe stage-fall).

Sorry, man.

HEAVY METAL: Watch where you're aiming your forces! I think you damaged my skin projector.

KASSIMOMBI: Angelina, can you plant suggestions?

ANGELICA: Sorry, Kassi. I can only read minds. I can't influence them.

KASSIMOMBI: Maybe that's because you've never tried. If you control one guard and I control the other, we can distract them longer.

ANGELICA: Can't you control them both?

KASSIMOMBI: It's better if we divide and conquer. Believe me; I've been doing this all my life.

ANGELINA: How can we control them without them catching on?

KASSIMOMBI: Plant ideas in their heads. Plausible ideas, like "These aren't the droids we're looking for."

ANGELICA: Show me.

KASSIMOMBI: I'm planting a suggestion in the one on the left. "I wonder if the gate latched.

Maybe if I open it and slam it again..."

ANGELICA: It's working! He's cracking open the gate!

HEAVY METAL: I'm going to ram it open!

ZERO: Wait! The current is still on.

(She gestures. A sound.)

Got it.

HEAVY METAL: Are you sure?

ZERO: One spark left.

(She zaps HEAVY METAL.)

Got it.

HEAVY METAL: Thanks. You're thorough!

ZANE: I'll try to push the metal gate.

ANGELICA: You're pulling the gate, not pushing it!

ZANE: Well excuse me, Miss Perfect! I'm new to my power and it didn't come with instructions!

HEAVY METAL: You could google it.

ZANE: If they gave us internet access.

ANGELICA: The one on the right is getting suspicious. He's turning our way.

KASSIMOMBI: *(planting a suggestion)* "Hey! What's that behind me?"

ANGELICA: Good job! It worked.

KASSIMOMBI: “The force has a strong influence on the weak minded.”

(A slamming sound is heard.)

ANGELICA: Rats! The other one latched the gate and probably turned on the current.

ZANE: They’re looking around...

KASSIMOMBI: *(planting an idea)* “It’s time for my coffee break.”

ANGELICA: *(planting the first idea she thinks of)* “I think I left the iron on!”

KASSIMOMBI: Seriously, Angie?!

ANGELICA: Maybe he worries about stuff like that. See! He’s leaving.

KASSIMOMBI: That’s probably a coincidence.

ZANE: I got another idea.

ZERO: You never run out of them.

ZANE: See that train car? It’s part metal.

HEAVY METAL: It’s mostly wooden.

ZANE: The wheels are metal. I could make them rotate.

HEAVY METAL: Can you do that?

ZANE: Trust me, H.M.

KASSIMOMBI: Hurry! We can’t distract the guard forever!

ZERO: Let me help. The train car must have an electric motor. It runs on its own power.

ZANE: I’ve got this! I’m spinning the wheels!

ZERO: I’ve got it. I’m starting the engine!

ZANE: Stop it, Zero! You’re running the motor the wrong direction.

ZERO: You stop, Zane! You’re spinning the wheels the wrong direction!

HEAVY METAL: Watch where you’re aiming!

(HEAVY METAL is knocked down again.)

Dude, you’re like my personal kryptonite.

ZANE: Sorry.

ANGELINA: The car’s not moving.

KASSIMOMBI: Great job, guys! You welded the wheels.

ZANE: If you’d let me do it myself....

ZERO: You didn’t have enough power!

ANGELINA: You’re making a scene! More guards are coming!

KASSIMOMBI: *(thought planting)* “Is that a grizzly bear out there?”

ANGELINA: “Incoming Flying Saucer.!”

(KASSIMOMBI stares at Angelina.)

Maybe he’s afraid of U.F.O’s!

KASSIMOMBI: Not in broad daylight!

ANGELINA: Well excuse me for trying!

ZERO: *(to ZANE, threatening)* My electricity is stronger than your magnetism.

ZANE: *(to ZERO, threatening)* You want to find out?

(They push a force-field between them.)

ZERO: Bring it on!

ZANE: Is that all you've got!

HEAVY METAL: *(getting between ZERO and ZANE)* Hey, we have to work as a team!

(HEAVY METAL puts his hands out. ZERO's electricity and ZANE's metal power hit HEAVY METAL and their powers both bounce off him and hit the one who used them.)

HEAVY METAL: Sorry, guys.

ZERO: Get up, Zane! They're coming!

ANGELICA: They're thinking of using their tasers.

KASSIMOMBI: "Maybe I shouldn't shoot teenagers with a taser!"

ANGELICA: They're still looking at us, Kassi. "Squirrel!"

KASSIMOMBI: Angie, they're people, not dogs!

ANGELICA: I'm out of ideas! You try something!

KASSIMOMBI: "Rainclouds! Might be lightning!"

ANGELICA: They're not buying it!

(to unseen guards)

Hi, guards. We were just headed back to the... yeah! You don't have to zap us. We're going.

HEAVY METAL: That was anti-climactic.

ZERO: We'll get out of here some day!

HEAVY METAL: Not if we can't work together!

(Blackout. End of scene.)

Scene Four:

Common room in The Facility

Remainers, plus Leavers, plus Newcomers

AT RISE—The Remainers have left their quarters and have carried their conversation into the common room. AINIA hangs back while NICOLE, ALAURA, and VANE surround TIFFANY.)

AINIA: Are you all going to follow her?

ALAURA: We're thinking about it.

TIFFANY: You should come too, Ainia.

AINIA: Can you keep me from transmitting viruses?

TIFFANY: Only if you agree to use the densifier.

AINIA: Never!

TIFFANY: Then I can't help you.

AINIA: They'd get to stay how they are! Why would I have to change?!

TIFFANY: Will the rest of you come with me?

NICOLE: We want to believe you, but why should we trust you?

TIFFANY: I've told you no lies.

ALAURA: What's your full name?

TIFFANY: Tiffany Cooper.

ALAURA: What's your middle name?

TIFFANY: I don't have one.

ALAURA: Or you just haven't thought of one yet?

NICOLE: You're trying to sell us on your plan, like Miss Gilmore did with our parents. Do you work for Miss Gilmore?

TIFFANY: I *am* Miss Gilmore!

(Pause.)

ALAURA: So... you're a shape-shifter.

TIFFANY: *(nodding)* I don't shift my shape very often. I've been Cynthia Gilmore for thirty years. This is how I looked at thirteen.

VANE: No offense, but Miss Gilmore looks like a fashion model and you look...

TIFFANY: Ordinary. It feels good to be ordinary.

(TIFFANY exits. The LEAVERS are thrust into the space, responding to offstage guards. ANGELICA and KASSIMOMBI wear helmets with chinstraps and ZERO and ZANE have devices on their arms. They struggle to remove them.)

ZANE: *(calling back at the unseen guards)* You can't keep us here in The Facility!

ZERO: Apparently they can.

ANGELICA: And they've learned how to neutralize our powers.

KASSIMOMBI: I feel like a dog in a pet cone.

ZERO: I can't get this thing off my arm! Can anyone pick a lock?

ZANE: I could move the metal tumblers if I could just undo my own lock!

ANGELICA: What did they do to you, H.M.?

HEAVY METAL: They couldn't take away my metal body. They took good care of me;

(indicating a device on his wrist)

even fixed my skin projector.

ANGELICA: Your what?

HEAVY METAL: The thing that projects my skin and makes me look normal. It got damaged during our attempted escape. My dad made it for me. It fooled everyone for a year until it stopped working.

VANE: What do you look like without it?

HEAVY METAL: C3PO as a zombie! It's not a pretty sight. I'm kind of self-conscious about it.
(The NEWCOMERS enter the room cautiously.)

KYE: Hello? Is this the common room?

VANE: You've come to the right place. Welcome to Camp Half-Blood.

NICOLE: I'm Hermes. Good to meet you, mortals. They cleared out Unit A to make room for you.

AMANDA: Was someone else living there?

BRI-HAN: Where did they go?

VANE: Home, but without their "hyper-biogenic abilities"... what we call our "superpowers."

STARLET: Do you all have some kind of hyper-whatever ability?

ALaura: Of course, and so you do, or Miss Gilmore wouldn't have recruited you.

AVA: That woman could sell anything to anyone, even without a ukulele.

KASSIMOMBI: Maybe she uses mind control.

ANGELICA: If she did, I could have detected it.

(AINIA has moved to a corner and is petting an imagined gila monster on her arm.)

STARLET: Hi. What do you have on your arm?

AINIA: A gila monster. It's imaginary. I wish I had a real one here.

(AINIA turns her back to STARLET and to the audience and keeps turning. A (prop) gila monster, materialized by STARLET, has appeared on her arm. AINIA whimpers nervously.)

STARLET: Pretty, isn't it?

AINIA: Pretty dangerous!

ALaura: You said you know how to handle them.

AINIA: Yeah, after I've tamed them!

KYE: *(to STARLET)* Did you make that appear?!

STARLET: She wanted it!

AINIA: Not a real one!

KYE: Make it disappear!

STARLET: I can't! My power doesn't work that way!

(AINIA turns around and the gila monster has vanished from her arm.)

AINIA: Where did it go?

AMANDA: Over here! I reached out and grabbed it off her arm.

(She holds & strokes a duplicate gila monster.)

Don't you like real reptiles?

AINIA: Not ones that are deadly and venomous!

(AMANDA freezes.)

BRI-HAN: Stretch your arm and hold it far away from you.

AMANDA: No matter how far I stretch my arm, it will bite me!

HEAVY METAL: I got this.

AINIA: Don't kill it!

HEAVY METAL: I'll put it in my candy drawer. Zane, don't try to steal my chocolate.

ZANE: Don't worry!

ANGELICA: Don't let it bite you!

HEAVY METAL: It already did.

(Some gasp.)

But I have very thick skin.

(He slaps his arm. It makes a ringing sound. He exits with the gila monster.)

BRI-HAN: That was weird.

VANE: In this place, "weird" is normal.

ALAURA: Introductions might take a while. We've got a lot of explaining to do.

AINIA: Maybe some of us don't want to share our stories.

AMANDA: We're cool with that, but it would help us get acquainted if you don't hold back.

AINIA: I'm holding onto my story. Thank you.

AVA: *(playing her ukulele and singing.)* "Let it go, let it go, can't hold it back anymore, let it go, let it go, turn around and tell us more."

(Encouraged by Ava's power of suggestion, most or all of the young people introduce themselves to one another and, ad-libbing, share their abilities and stories- no more than 20 to 30 seconds. As AVA strums, characters tell each other anything they need to know about each other in the later scenes. Finally, BRI-HAN takes Ava's ukulele and hands it off to NICOLE.)

BRI-HAN: Enough already!

AVA: You don't want to hear everyone else's stories?

BRI-HAN: *(He hands the ukulele off to ZERO.)* No! You're giving me an ear-worm!

(NICOLE plays and speaks her line as the others hum.)

NICOLE: I run faster than people can see, so they always suspect that I'm tricking them.

(She stops playing.)

I just want to be normal!

KYE: We all feel that way sometimes. I have to fight so hard to keep myself from losing control.

ZANE: I can bend and twist metal... sometimes when I'm not trying to.

ZERO: One time, I almost electrocuted my friend.

ALAURA: I helped my friend calm down when she couldn't sleep, and I accidentally put her into a coma.

(ZERO or AVA may strum the ukulele under these lines.)

AMANDA: I reach out to everyone but I feel like I'm stretched too thin.

VANE: I can control the internet, but someone else might control me.

KASSIMOMBI: I can make people do what I want, so I never know if they trust me.

AVA: *(nodding)* People always give me what I want, so I'm spoiled.

STARLET: I give people what they want, but it's not always what they need.

ANGELICA: I know everyone's hopes and fears but they never know mine.

BRI-HAN: My enemies don't bully me but my friends are afraid of me.

HEAVY METAL: I look normal to people but they'd run if they knew what I look like.

AINIA: I can cure diseases but I also spread them.

KYE: We could all be dangerous because others could manipulate our powers.

HEAVY METAL: It's a terrible thing to be useful.

VANE: Well, you'd better settle in. You're going to be here for a while.

ZANE: Our unit is better than Unit A. You could have had it to yourselves. We almost managed to escape.

ZERO: *(to ZANE, like a Scooby Doo villain)* And we would have succeeded too, if it hadn't been for this meddling teenager.

ZANE: If you'd just let me handle it...

ZERO: Because you're a guy?!

KASSIMOMBI: Hey! Cool it!

AVA: Don't make me use my ukulele!

(TIFFANY returns and draws focus.)

TIFFANY: If you had managed to escape, where would you have gone?

HEAVY METAL: We didn't have much of a plan post-breakout.

ZERO: *(to TIFFANY)* Who are you?

TIFFANY: Someone who can provide you with a home and a choice.

ALaura: She's a shape-shifter. She used to be Miss Gilmore.

NICOLE: She calls herself Tiffany Cooper.

TIFFANY: Do you mean what you said?

(pause)

Do you want to be normal?

(pause)

Be free of your hyper-biogenic abilities? Or do you want to retain them?

KASSIMOMBI: What are you proposing?

TIFFANY: There's a place I've been preparing, not far from here. It looks like an old sawmill, but you could all live inside it quite comfortably.

BRI-HAN: Would we be safe?

TIFFANY: You could protect each other.

STARLET: Would we have food?

TIFFANY: You could provide them with food, until they can grow their own.

KYE: I could provide us with heat.

ZERO: I could provide us with power.

AMANDA: The real question is whether we should trust you.

ANGELICA: I can't read her thoughts.

HEAVY METAL: That's because of your helmet.

ANGELICA: Oh yeah.

KASSIMOMBI: Does anyone have a skeleton key?

STARLET: (*producing a key*) Like this one?

KASSIMOMBI: Perfect! Starlet, you're my new favorite room-mate.

ZERO: What about me?

KASSIMOMBI: You snore when you're asleep.

ZERO: Well you breathe loudly when you're awake!

(ANGELICA, KASSIMOMBI, ZANE, and ZERO use the key to remove their helmets and devices. AINIA approaches TIFFANY and sits with her while the others stand around her.)

AINIA: Tell them your story, Tiffany. If you do, they'll trust you.

VANE: Why do you work for The Facility?

TIFFANY: I believe in what they were doing. People with powers like yours used to disappear. It's better to lose your powers than to be lost.

KYE: Alaura says you're a shapeshifter. Is that true?

TIFFANY: Yes.

NICOLE: Then change back into Miss Gilmore and we'll know you've been telling us the truth.

TIFFANY: I can't do that right now.

ZERO: How convenient!

AINIA: Tell them why you can't.

TIFFANY: With great effort, I can change my shape but I can't change my size or mass.

BRI-HAN: Exactly! They always ignore that fact in sci-fi!

AVA: You're a lot smaller than you were as Miss Gilmore.

TIFFANY: (*nodding*) I convinced NASA to lend me one of their densifiers. They make space cargos smaller. It helped me reduce my form to my thirteen-year-old self.

AMANDA: When you were as young as you now look, could you alter your shape?

TIFFANY: I could change my appearance at will.

ZERO: That would be totally awesome!

TIFFANY: If I didn't like my nose, or my hair, or my ears, or my figure, I could change, slowly, so no one would notice. I looked extraordinary, and beauty is the greatest superpower.

VANE: Did anyone figure out what you were doing?

TIFFANY: (*shaking her head*) By the time I turned eighteen, I was as pretty as any girl in school. My boyfriend George was in love with my beauty, until Cynthia Gilmore moved in. When he dumped me for Cynthia, I followed her around until I'd made myself look exactly like her. I wanted to get rid of the real Cynthia.

ZANE: Did you... eliminate her?

TIFFANY: (*shaking her head*) No. She spotted me and stared at me.

AVA: Was she furious?

TIFFANY: She smiled and said, “Very well, *Cynthia*. You’ve set me free.”

(TIFFANY sits in front of AINIA and looks at her. KASSIMOMBI, ANGELICA, and ALAURA surround TIFFANY supportively.)

AINIA: Tell them the rest, Tiffany.

TIFFANY: I can’t!

AINIA: Then open your mind so they can tell your story.

(TIFFANY nods her approval. She stares at AINIA as the story is told by KASSIMOMBI, ANGELICA, and ALAURA as they read her thoughts, possibly reaching their hands toward TIFFANY’s head. Soft underscoring may play under the relating of the story.)

ALAURA: The real *Cynthia* ran away. Tiffany thought she was coming back, so she went to *Cynthia’s* home and took her place.

ANGELICA: But *Cynthia* never came back, so Tiffany had to keep being *Cynthia*.

KASSIMOMBI: Tiffany vanished; her parents never learned why, and it broke their hearts.

ALAURA: And Tiffany Cooper became *Cynthia Gilmore* for the next thirty years.

ANGELICA: Her parents were strict and unforgiving, even though she was a straight A student.

KASSIMOMBI: But *Cynthia* was stricter with herself. In the mirror, she never seemed pretty enough.

ALAURA: Although she was rich, she almost starved herself.

ANGELICA: Although she was successful, she could never be proud of herself.

KASSIMOMBI: Although George adored her, she felt she didn’t deserve his love.

ALAURA: *Cynthia Gilmore* left George and lived alone.

ANGELICA: She found her way to The Facility

KASSIMOMBI: She neutralized the powers of others so they wouldn’t abuse them as she had.

TIFFANY: To be more than human is to be less than human, unless you are wiser than me.

(Underscoring, if used, ends.)

KYE: Where is this sawmill?

TIFFANY: A day’s journey through the snow, due west of here.

ZANE: How do we escape?

VANE: How do we get to the sawmill?

TIFFANY: If you can’t work together to figure that out, you won’t be able to survive there.

STARLET: Won’t they come looking for us?

TIFFANY: I’ll keep them searching in the wrong directions.

VANE: As *Cynthia Gilmore*?

TIFFANY: As Tiffany Cooper, a new arrival who came in on the train car today.

NICOLE: You should come with us, so you can make a different choice.

AINIA: And someone has to work the densifier.

TIFFANY: Would you go back to being a child?

AINIA: Would you go back to being an adult?

TIFFANY: I don't know yet.

AINIA: Me neither. We can choose when we get there.

ALaura: *(obviously pleased with herself)* Now's a good time to go. The adults at The Facility have suddenly fallen asleep.

NICOLE: Like in Sleeping Beauty's castle?

VANE: The security cameras have fallen asleep as well.

KYE: We'll have a better chance of escaping if we travel in small groups.

HEAVY METAL: But how are we going to get over the fence?

AMANDA: You're metal. Zane can levitate you over the fence and you can carry your team-mates with you.

HEAVY METAL: Wow! You're like super smart!

KYE: Let's go. We'll all meet up at the sawmill.

(Blackout. End of Scene.)

TWELVE PAGES TO THE END OF THE SCRIPT